

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 INT-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 CCO-00 OC-05 /034 W
----- 084092

R 140940Z MAR 75

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1750

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS BAGHDAD 0266

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTRA, IZ

SUBJECT: ALCOA NON-VISIT TO BAGHDAD

REF: (A) TEHRAN 2017 (NOTAL); (B) BAGHDAD 227 (NOTAL);
(C) TEHRAN 2120 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: THREE ALCOA OFFICIALS ATTEMPTED BUT FAILED
VISIT BAGHDAD IN REGARD MAJOR ALUMINUM SMELTER PROJECT.
ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT INFORM ALCOA OF USINT'S
EFFORT TO ASSIST AND GOI MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY'S
HOPE THAT ALCOA WILL RESCHEDULE BAGHDAD VISIT.

2. TEHRAN INFORMED USINT THROUGH IMMEDIATE CABLE (REF A.)
ROUTED VIA AMEMBASSY BEIRUT MARCH 3 AND RECEIVED BAGHDAD
MARCH 4 VIA COMMERCIAL CHANNEL THAT THREE ALCOA OFFICIALS
(HARVEY JOHNSON, RICHARD FISCHER AND R. BANKS SMITH) OF
ALCOA HEAD OFFICE IN PITTSBURGH INTENDED FLY BAGHDAD
EVENING OF MARCH 5. USINT WAS ASKED HELP GROUP BY
PERSUADING MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY SEND CABLE TO PERMIT
ISSUANCE OF IRAQI VISAS IN TEHRAN.

3. WITHIN MINUTES OF RECEIPT OF REF. A., USINT HAD
SECURED REQUIRED MINISTRY INVITATION IN FORM OF AIRPORT
VISA. MINISTRY DECLINED SEND ITS OWN CABLE SAYING IT
WOULD NEVER ARRIVE THERE IN TIME. WE SENT CABLES
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TO TEHRAN (BOTH COMMERCIALY VIA LONDON AND ALSO VIA

POUCH TO BEIRUT FOR RETRANSMISSION).

4. OUR REPLY (REF B) APPARENTLY REACHED TEHRAN AFTERNOON OF MARCH 5 (SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE FLIGHT TIME) BUT ALCOA GROUP HAD CHECKED OUT OF HOTEL AT NOON WITHOUT FURTHER REFERENCE TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN (REF C). MEANWHILE, USINT OFFICER AND DRIVER WENT TO BAGDHDAD AIRPORT TO MEET AND ASSIST GROUP WHICH DID NOT ARRIVE.

5. USINT HAS HEAR NOTHING FURTHER FROM ALCOA GROUP BUT WISHES INFORM COMPANY THAT MINISTRY WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH GROUP'S NON-APPEARANCE AND IS TAKING FOR GRANTED THAT OFFICIALS WILL SHOW UP HERE AGAIN SHORTLY TO BID ON 340 MILLION DOLLAR ALUMINUM SMELTER PROJECT. ASSUMING GRUP IS NOW BACK IN PITTSBURGH, SHOULD BE SIMPLE MATTER TO GET VISAS FROM IRAQI INTERESTS SECTION IN WASHINGTON. AT MINIMUM BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR GROUP WRITE TO MINISTRY EXPLAINING REASON IT DID NOT APPEAR AFTER URGENT REQUEST FOR VISA ASSISTANCE.

6. COMMENT: ABOVE INCIDENT JOINS NUMBER OF CASES IN WHICH USINT'S ESSENTIALLY NINETEENTH CENTURY COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES OFFER INADEQUATE SUPPORT TO US FIRMS IN NEED OF VISA ASSISTANCE OR ATTEMPTING TO MEET LAST MINUTE BID DEADLINES ON MAJOR PROJECTS.
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